

HB 2415 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Housing and Development

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Meeting Dates: 5/6, 5/18

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) to establish minimum standards in electronic building codes processes for reviewing plans, issuing permits, and performing field inspections. Mandates use of DCBS e-permitting system or equivalent system for municipalities and other public bodies. Requires e-permitting system to include payment for permit applications; receipt of plan approvals and permits; receipt of requests for inspections; performance of electronic field inspections; construction progress inspections; and onsite verification of building code compliance. Becomes operative January 1, 2025. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Local government involvement in policymaking process
- Impact on municipalities

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2003, the Building Codes Division of the Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) worked with local governments and contractors to implement a pilot project for an electronic building permit system referred to as e-permitting. The system allows contractors to apply access building code information, submit permit applications and plans for review, and schedule inspections online and around the clock. Legislation was passed in 2005 and 2007 that transitioned the program from a pilot to a regional, then statewide, service to contractors and local governments with a sunset date in 2018. In 2015, the Legislative Assembly removed the sunset and reduced the surcharge that supports the e-permitting system. The surcharge is equal to four percent of the permit fee and is paid by all contractors regardless of whether the jurisdiction participates in the e-permitting system. Use of the system by cities and counties is voluntary and DCBS is prohibited from taking any adverse action against an entity that chooses not to use the system.

House Bill 2415 A requires DCBS to establish minimum standards in electronic building codes processes for reviewing plans, issuing permits, and performing field inspections. By January 1, 2025, municipalities and other public bodies must be using the DCBS e-permitting system or an equivalent system that meets the minimum standards adopted by DCBS. The e-permitting system must include payment for permit applications; receipt of plan approvals and permits; receipt of requests for inspections; performance of electronic field inspections; construction progress inspections; and onsite verification of building code compliance.